

Blackford, MG. 2004. Environmental justice, native rights, tourism, and opposition to military control: the case of Kaho'olawe. *The Journal of American History* 91(2).

www.historycooperative.org

Environmental Justice, Native Rights, Tourism, and Opposition to Military Control: The Case of Kaho'olawe

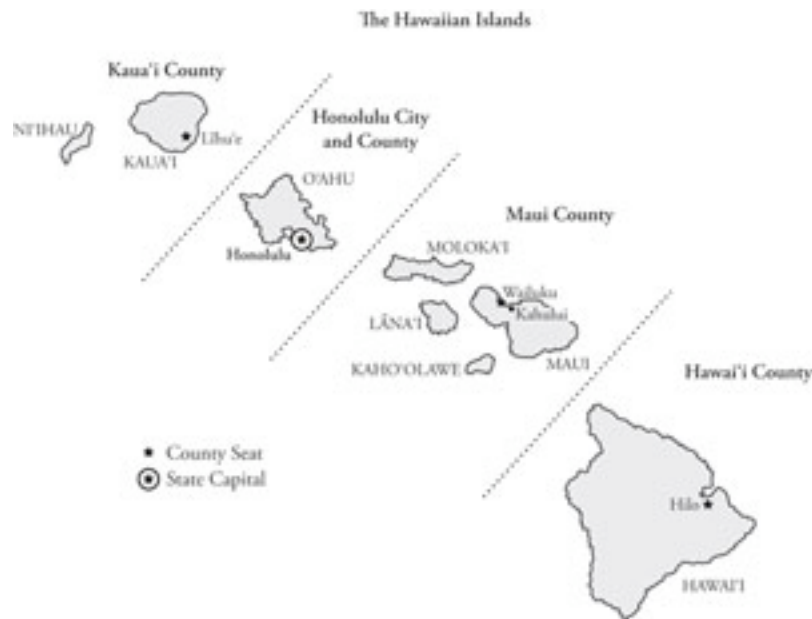
Mansel G. Blackford

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, pilots of American F-4 Phantom fighter-bombers training for the Vietnam War repeatedly swept down on targets placed on Kaho'olawe, the smallest of the eight major islands of the Hawaiian archipelago and the only one being used as a bombing range. Between 1968 and 1970, the warplanes dropped twenty-five hundred tons of bombs on Kaho'olawe; in the latter year alone, they bombarded the island for 315 days, solidifying its reputation as "the most bombed island in the Pacific." The American military had used Kaho'olawe as a target range since the 1930s, and even earlier, goats, sheep, cattle, and horses introduced by westerners had overgrazed the island, degrading its environment. The ground was severely eroded, and with much of its original vegetation gone, Kaho'olawe became home to alien plant species. Unexploded bombs made traveling on the island and fishing in nearby waters unsafe. Sediment carried to sea in runoffs killed nearshore reefs.¹

1

Beginning in the 1960s, returning Kaho'olawe to its circumstances before Western contact became an important goal for environmentalists, native Hawaiians, and politicians. For native Hawaiians especially, restoration also represented cultural renewal. George Helm, a major native Hawaiian leader, claimed that it was his "moral responsibility to attempt an ending to this desecration of our sacred aina [land] ... for each bomb dropped adds further injury to an already wounded soul." Similarly, Dr. Noa Emmett

Aluli—like Helm an important native Hawaiian leader—observed, "The work to heal the island will heal the soul of our people. Each time we pick up a stone to restore a cultural site on the island, we pick up ourselves, as Hawaiians." As native Hawaiians rediscovered their culture in the 1970s, the restoration of Kaho'olawe became a burning topic and a major catalyst for the native Hawaiian renaissance.²



Kaho'olawe, just eight miles southwest of Maui, is the eighth largest of the Hawaiian Islands. *Reprinted from Mansel G. Blackford, Fragile Paradise: The Impact of Tourism on Maui, 1959–2000 (Lawrence, 2001), 8. Courtesy University Press of Kansas.*

This article looks at how disparate issues fused in the movement to halt the environmental degradation of Kaho'olawe. The essay begins by briefly discussing the environmental changes that ranching and military usage brought to Kaho'olawe and then investigates how and why some Hawaiian residents began to oppose those alterations. Initially unconcerned with native Hawaiian rights, ranchers, environmentalists, and local politicians mounted the first challenges to the military for reasons ranging from their dislike of federal government authority to their desire to use Kaho'olawe as a park and finally to their hope that the island could be preserved as a pristine alternative to the nearby island of Maui, which was experiencing a tourism boom. In the mid-1970s, native Hawaiians became the most important, though not the only,

group who advocated changing the status of Kaho'olawe. For native Hawaiians, restoring the island physically and using it as a site for cultural renewal went hand in hand. Ultimately, they desired the removal of Kaho'olawe from American military control, its restoration to the state of Hawai'i, and a state pledge to give them the island when they established their own sovereign nation. How they succeeded in convincing other Hawaiian residents to support their goals in the face of opposition from the U.S. Navy is an informative story of intergroup dynamics.

3

Beyond what it reveals about Hawaiian history, this article is important for what it reveals about environmentalism in modern America. As scholars have shown in the past three decades, environmentalism has assumed many shapes and sizes, and developments in Hawai'i illustrate the movement's complexity well. Scholars have increasingly related the development of modern environmentalism in the United States to alterations in American society, politics, and culture. For example, Adam Rome, a leading environmental historian, found the well-springs of 1960s environmentalism in "the revitalization of liberalism, the growing discontent of middle-class women, and the explosion of student radicalism and countercultural protest." Similarly, in her 2003 presidential address to the American Society for Environmental History, Carolyn Merchant observed links between environmentalism, social and cultural changes—notably the growing salience of race in American politics—and the writing of environmental history. "In recent years," she stated, "environmental historians too have reflected on the crisis of racial awareness for the field and collectively have begun the process of writing an environmental history of race." Moreover, she continued, "The negative connections between wilderness and race, cities and race, toxics and race, and their reversal in environmental justice have been explored by numerous scholars."3

4

As Merchant pointed out, a growing number of scholars have become involved in documenting America's environmental justice movement, a campaign begun in the 1970s and 1980s to address the placing of garbage dumps, hazardous waste sites, power plants, and other nuisances in neighborhoods populated mainly by people of color. Most historians looking at the burgeoning environmental

justice movement have examined it in urban settings.⁴

5

In effect, in the movement to recover Kaho'olawe, native Hawaiians created a distinctive postcolonial variant of the U.S. environmental justice campaign. Far from being an urban area, Kaho'olawe is an unpopulated rural island. The efforts to end the bombing and begin its restoration show cleavages as well as cooperation within the ranks of environmentalists, native groups, politicians, and the general public. At its heart, the success of native Hawaiians rested on a spicy blend of culture, politics, and public policy—a combination of rediscovered native symbols, direct action, and astute use of courts. They could succeed partly because federal law devolved some aspects of environmental management to locals, with lawsuits as a major mode of management.

6

The efforts of native Hawaiians resembled those of Native Americans and indigenous Pacific peoples to protect their environments, often by ending or limiting military use of their lands. In the American West, some tribes found themselves at loggerheads with the military over land use. The Western Shoshone, for example, successfully worked with non-Indian groups in the 1980s to derail plans to base a mobileMX missile system in the Great Basin region.⁵ While native Hawaiians sympathized with the Native Americans, they took little part in those protests against the military. Native Hawaiians viewed themselves as a Pacific people and were most concerned about developments in the Hawaiian and other Pacific islands. In fact, protests on Kaho'olawe directly connect with changes taking place in other parts of the Pacific region, especially with attempts to stop the use of Pacific islands as nuclear testing sites and military bases.

7

While local in their origins and development, environmental actions to restore Kaho'olawe were transnational in their implications. Many native Hawaiians who labored to reassert their control over Kaho'olawe saw their efforts as part of a wider movement that aimed to remove what they viewed as colonial controls over the lives of Pacific Islanders. Their work to end perceived injustices led some native Hawaiians to play active roles in antimilitary movements and to engage in pan-Pacific organizing.

Their efforts have reflected, and have been part of, the growing integration of the Pacific as a region during and after World War II. Although it is difficult to speak of a trans-Pacific community as many scholars do of a transatlantic community, linkages have existed throughout the Pacific Ocean for centuries and have increased since the 1940s. Some connections have been economic—for example, those created by trade and tourism. Others have been more social and cultural, such as the movement of peoples, often called a "Pacific diaspora." Looming over all those linkages has been the U.S. military presence during the decades of the Cold War, which acted as a glue holding together large parts of the region yet motivated transnational protests by Pacific peoples.⁶

8

Ranching, Bombing, and Early Opposition to the Military

Before Capt. James Cook "discovered" the Hawaiian Islands in 1778, Kaho'olawe supported a semipermanent population of Hawaiians who lived by farming and fishing. The smallest of the four islands that compose presentday Maui County, Kaho'olawe lies approximately eight miles southwest of Maui. Eleven miles long and seven miles wide, Kaho'olawe covers 28,600 acres. Lying in Maui's rain shadow, Kaho'olawe is generally arid, with rainfall limited to occasional heavy showers during periods of southerly winds. Perhaps 300 people lived on the island in the mid-1700s. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, wars to unify the Hawaiian Islands and diseases unintentionally introduced by westerners decimated the population of Kaho'olawe. In addition, the population of Hawaiians may have been constrained by the limitations of Kaho'olawe's environment, including the changes Hawaiian farming methods brought to the land. Only 160 or fewer people remained on the island in 1805.⁷



As seen from Maui, the island of Kaho'olawe presents an imposing sight despite its small size. The island, a spiritual center and navigation marker in precontact times, is still considered sacred by many native Hawaiians. *Courtesy Pat Badgero.*

In precontact times, Kaho'olawe was important as a spiritual center and navigation marker as well as a source of food. As both scholars and native Hawaiian activists agree, the island, "was originally named Kohemlamalama O Kanaloa and just simply Kanaloa, after the Hawaiian and Polynesian god of the ocean currents and navigation." Ancient Hawaiians considered Kaho'olawe—as many native Hawaiians today do—a *wahi pana* (sacred place) born of the union of Papa (sky father) and Wakea (earth mother). Hawaiians also thought of Kaho'olawe as a *pu'uhonua* (place of refuge). Moreover, the island's southern tip may have been a launching point for voyages between Tahiti and Hawai'i. The summit of the island was the location of a traditional training school for navigators. [8](#)

10

Ecological change on Kaho'olawe, which began with the first settlement by native Hawaiians, quickened with the coming of westerners, especially with their use of the island for ranching. Eager to raise funds for its operations, increasingly influenced by westerners, and not at the time overly concerned about the island's cultural or spiritual importance, the Hawaiian government leased all of Kaho'olawe to Robert Wyllie, the kingdom's minister of foreign affairs, and Elisha Allen, the chief justice of the kingdom's supreme court, in 1858. By 1887 about nine hundred head of cattle, twelve thousand sheep, and numerous goats roamed the island. The destruction of vegetation due to overgrazing and the concomitant soil erosion were recognized as substantial problems by the late nineteenth century. *Kiawe* trees, an alien species from Peru (also

known as mesquite or *algarroba* and closely related to the mesquite of the American Southwest), were planted in an attempt to restore the land, as were eucalyptus trees, Australian salt bushes, and several indigenous varieties of trees and bushes, such as sandalwood, native cotton, and Hawaiian tobacco. Sporadic and only partly successful efforts were also made to eliminate the goats.⁹

11

Another stage in Western use of Kaho'olawe began when military training replaced ranching. As early as the 1930s, army pilots hung from the cockpits of their biplanes to drop hand-held bombs on targets on the island's western end. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the military took over the island and ranching ended. According to navy officials, military concerns required the continued use of Kaho'olawe after World War II, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower transferred Kaho'olawe to the jurisdiction of the navy by executive order in 1953. Although it reserved Kaho'olawe for the navy, Eisenhower's order contained provisions for environmental restoration, specifying that the navy would limit the number of goats on the island to two hundred. In addition, Hawaiian territorial officials were to be allowed "at reasonable intervals to enter and inspect the island to ascertain the extent of forest cover, erosion, and animal life thereon, and to sow or plant suitable grasses and plants under a program of soil conservation." Most important in light of later events, when the navy no longer needed Kaho'olawe, it was to return the island to the territory of Hawai'i in a condition "reasonably safe for human habitation, without cost to the Territory."¹⁰

12

The navy maintained a significant presence in the Hawaiian Islands. America's Pacific command (Commander in Chief Pacific, or CINCPAC) was headquartered at Pearl Harbor. CINCPAC's scope of operations extended throughout the Pacific and into the Far East, South and Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean. A unified command of the nation's military services, CINCPAC was nonetheless mainly a naval show. In the late 1980s the navy had 116 facilities and the marines another 98 in the Hawaiian Islands. Even so, the relative importance of the military to the Hawaiian economy declined over time. The number of military personnel on the islands each year from the early 1950s to the mid-1980s came

to between fifty and sixty thousand. Military personnel and civilian employees of the military (and the dependents of both) composed about 35 percent of the population of the Hawaiian Islands in 1955; but, as the population of the islands increased and the economy diversified, their share of the population decreased to about 20 percent by 1988. Military expenditures accounted for nearly one-third of Hawaiian residents' personal income in 1949, but only 7.5 percent in 1988. By way of contrast, tourism accounted for just 2.4 percent of Hawaiian residents' personal income in 1949, but nearly one-third by 1988.¹¹

13

As the navy explained in a 1972 report, throughout the 1950s and 1960s it used Kaho'olawe "for training in air-to-ground weapons delivery and shore bombardment." The navy set up seventeen air-to-surface targets and twenty-one surface-to-surface targets on Kaho'olawe, mainly at its center. Exceptional tests punctuated routine training; in 1965, for example, the navy simulated small atomic bomb explosions to explore the effects of blasts on ships anchored near Kaho'olawe. One detonation of five hundred tons of TNT left a large ocean-filled crater on the island that remains today. Kaho'olawe was especially heavily used by pilots and gunners preparing for service in Vietnam.¹²

14

Increased bombing in the 1960s, combined with a growing environmental awareness in the Hawaiian Islands, brought the first major opposition to the use of Kaho'olawe as a military range. The passage of clean air, clean water, wilderness protection, and endangered species acts by Congress in the 1960s and 1970s and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970 signaled that environmentalism had reached a new stage of maturity. The explosive growth of tourism throughout the Hawaiian Islands unified many local groups and people in early environmental efforts. In 1959 the coming of statehood and the arrival of jet airplanes made tourism boom. Between 1958 and 1973, the number of tourists visiting the Hawaiian Islands rose an average of 20 percent each year, increasing from 171,000 to 2,631,000. Land-use issues, water matters, community development topics, and quality-of-life concerns dominated politics and policy making in the islands. Nowhere were those concerns more pressing than in Maui County, particularly on the

island of Maui, which experienced especially rapid growth during the 1970s and 1980s. By extension, many saw the navy's use of Kaho'olawe, which was separated from the island of Maui by only an eight-mile-wide channel, as part of the more general problem of environmental protection.¹³

15

Elmer Cravalho, a leading politician in the Hawaiian Islands, led the initial charge against the navy. As Maui County's forceful mayor, Cravalho came to view the bombing with a jaundiced eye. Bombs, he thought, were bad for business, especially tourism. A staunch believer in home rule, he also disliked actions of the federal and state governments that impinged on his local political power. In early 1969 Cravalho complained to Rear Adm. Fred Bakutis, commandant of the Fourteenth Naval District, that bombing might have an adverse "impact on development here." As Cravalho explained, "We're talking about the investment of millions of dollars on this coast in the next 20 to 25 years." All bombardment should cease, Cravalho thought. Bakutis agreed to give Maui's residents prior notice of any bombing and said that the navy would look into relocating targets to the side of Kaho'olawe farthest away from Maui, but he insisted that the bombing continue.¹⁴

16

Ironically, that first effort to end the bombing focused, not on the value of preserving Kaho'olawe as a pristine place, but on opening Maui to tourism. How those opposing the bombing of Kaho'olawe viewed tourism was complex. The initial objective of many opponents of bombing was to make Maui more attractive for touristic development. Yet attitudes changed. By the 1980s and 1990s, many who pushed for Kaho'olawe's preservation, particularly most native Hawaiians, came to see it as an antidote to the all-too-successful, runaway resort development of Maui—a real shift in values from those of a few decades earlier.

17

Cravalho soon expanded his criticism to include environmental concerns. In September 1969 he called the navy to task for not eradicating the goats on Kaho'olawe as specified by the 1953 executive order. Then came a blockbuster discovery: an unexploded five-hundred-pound bomb, accidentally dropped on Maui by a navy plane, was found on land in which Cravalho had a

commercial interest. Navy technicians exploded it without physical harm to the island, but the ideological damage had been done. Cravalho attacked the navy for having "wantonly ravaged and destroyed" Kaho'olawe. In a mixed appeal to preservation and resource development, Cravalho called for "productive use of the island" at a time "when the rallying cry of our citizens is focusing attention on the protection of our environment." By mid-1970 he was suggesting the use of Kaho'olawe as a park, saying, "It's an ideal place for just lying around, swimming or fishing; it's a beautiful place."¹⁵

18

Led by Cravalho, other politicians came to oppose the navy's use of Kaho'olawe. In 1969 members of the Maui County Council (given the absence of a city council, the governing body in local politics) called for the termination of all bombing, a stance reaffirmed in later years. Three members of the state's congressional delegation—Rep. Patsy Mink, Rep. Spark Matsunaga, and Sen. Hiram Fong—like Cravalho greatly disturbed by the discovery of the bomb on Maui, urged Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird to halt all bombing on Kaho'olawe so as to avoid, in Matsunaga's words, "a major disaster." In 1971 Sen. Daniel Inouye joined his Hawaiian colleagues in Congress in urging that Kaho'olawe be returned to the state of Hawai'i. Inouye was an influential figure in Washington, and his opposition to the bombing counted. He was himself a veteran of the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team, composed of Americans of Japanese ancestry. Long a supporter of the American military on most matters, Inouye made a telling statement when he broke with the navy over the bombing of Kaho'olawe. In opposing the navy, the politicians were concerned about more than the environment of Kaho'olawe. Like the political leaders of many western states, they wanted to wrest control of their land from federal officials. Like Cravalho, they resented having others tell them what to do.¹⁶



In this October 1999 photograph, a sign warning of the danger of unexploded ordnance contrasts starkly with the beautiful Kaho'olawe beach behind it. Beginning in the late 1960s, native Hawaiians discovered that the U.S. Navy's practice bombing on the island had made Kaho'olawe dangerous to visitors. *Courtesy Kaho'olawe UXO Project, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Pacific Division.*

Grass-roots environmental groups added their support. Most important was Life of the Land, an organization initially formed in 1968 to clean up beaches on O'ahu. Led by the charismatic Tony Hodges, the group made halting the bombing one of its causes. In 1971 Hodges filed suit against the navy in federal court, charging that the use of Kaho'olawe as a target range violated the National Environmental Protection Act of 1969, which required that federal agencies prepare and file for public comment environmental impact statements for any actions that might harm the environment. The navy had, as Hodges noted, failed to do so. Hodges employed sarcasm in his public statements. "I hope the navy pilots have learned to recognize their targets a little better," Hodges told a newspaper reporter in reference to the bomb discovered on Maui. "Both I, and I am sure, Alexander and Baldwin, would hate to see bomber pilots mistake the Wailea resort area for Kahoolawe." Wailea was a new, multimillion-dollar resort being constructed on South Maui, directly across an ocean channel from Kaho'olawe, by Alexander and Baldwin, one of Hawai'i's "Big Five" agricultural firms that was then making a transition to tourism. Hodges concluded, "Perhaps A & B should include some sort of anti-aircraft batteries in its master plan." Asked to join the suit against the navy, Cravalho was eager to do so, observing that the navy's attitude was "arrogant" and that it had "completely ignored the County."¹⁷

Navy officials prepared an environmental impact statement in early 1972 in response to the lawsuit. The statement admitted that shelling and bombing hurt Kaho'olawe but highlighted the perceived "beneficial environmental effects of military use," ranging from the pulverization of the island's soil, which made it amenable to the growth of vegetation, to the accumulation of rain runoff in bomb craters. Navy representatives argued that "the mineral content per acre of the target sites, from [shell and bomb] fragmentations, might someday prove economically worthwhile from the standpoint of salvage and retrieval of some of the metallic alloy material involved." "Unexploded dud ordnance" did constitute "a major problem," but one "without noticeably adverse effect on the human population spread within the Hawaiian archipelago." In short, according to the navy, "thirty years of use of the island as a target site" had "slightly improved the balance of the island's ecosystems."¹⁸

21

Nor, according to navy officials, were alternative uses available. The navy's report claimed that Kaho'olawe "contains no areas of particular aesthetic value." Unlike Cravalho, navy officials thought it unsuitable for picnicking, hiking, or hunting. The navy did increase its efforts to reduce the goat population and boosted its restoration work, planting fifteen thousand trees and shrubs, mainly alien species such as eucalyptus and tamarisk trees, but also some native species, such as *wiliwili* and *Acacia koa*. (Many of the trees and bushes died when the navy failed to water them.) Nonetheless, the navy adamantly refused to yield on the main bone of contention: its right to bomb and shell Kaho'olawe. After surveying other possible sites in the Pacific and debating the possibility of constructing an artificial island, navy officers concluded that no other option fit their needs. Cost considerations, ownership issues, distances from military bases, and the inability to use other sites year-round ruled out other possibilities. Only Kaho'olawe would do. Such would be the navy's stance into the 1990s, even as it slowly yielded on some minor demands of those seeking a halt to the use of the island as a military range. The federal court, satisfied that the navy had completed a meaningful environmental impact statement, dismissed the case in late 1972.¹⁹



vergrazing by goats introduced to Kaho'olawe by Western explorers and sea captains in the 1790s, combined with the navy's shelling and bombing of the island during the mid-twentieth century, led to massive soil erosion. *Courtesy Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission.*

Native Hawaiians and Direct Action

In the mid-1970s, native Hawaiians became the leading opponents of military use of Kaho'olawe, turning what had been a local conflict into a major statewide issue that attracted national attention. Their actions became part of the native Hawaiian renaissance, a movement that sought the return of lost lands, the revival of Hawaiian culture, and political sovereignty. Beginning as a response to the removal of native Hawaiian farmers from lands on O'ahu in the late 1960s, the movement later broadened. According to Haunani-Kay Trask, a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i and a leading native Hawaiian activist, efforts moved from "an ongoing series of land struggles throughout the decade of the seventies" to "a larger struggle for native Hawaiian autonomy" in the 1980s. The movement also, she noted, "branched out politically to link up with American Indian activists on the mainland, anti-nuclear independence struggles throughout the South Pacific, and international networks in Asia and at the United Nations."²⁰

As Trask observed, native Hawaiian leaders—like some other indigenous Pacific peoples, such as some of the Maori of New Zealand—became proponents of a nuclear-free Pacific and extended their antimilitary campaign from Kaho'olawe to other Pacific islands. The Maori also sought to reassert their control over lands lost to the British since the 1840s. Native American efforts, especially after World War II, aimed to regain lands and water and fishing rights lost in broken treaties, objectives that were similar to those of many native Hawaiians. Yet ties between Native American and native Hawaiian groups were usually tenuous, for native Hawaiians identified with Pacific peoples rather than considering themselves a Native American tribe. A transnational pan-Pacific identity began to form, largely based on indigenous peoples' opposition to the American (and in some areas the French and British) military presence in the Pacific. [21](#)

24

Some of the native Hawaiian opposition to the bombing of Kaho'olawe began with Charles Kauluwehi Maxwell. A resident of Maui, Maxwell organized the Aboriginal Lands of Hawaiian Ancestry (ALPHA) in the early 1970s. As he informed the Maui County Council in late 1973, ALPHA's "primary objective [was] to seek land or money reparations from the United States Congress" in compensation for the lands its members thought had been taken illegally in the late 1800s. The "Island of Kahoolawe will be among the lands we are seeking," Maxwell announced. Maxwell lobbied Congress, to no avail. Returning from Washington, Maxwell focused his energies on Kaho'olawe, largely as a result of an epiphany he experienced in the summer of 1975. Despite the navy prohibition of the activity, he was hunting with several friends on Kaho'olawe when they were surprised by a navy helicopter flying overhead. As his friends hid under *kiawe* trees, Maxwell stood his ground. A thought came to him: "I am a native Hawaiian. I have prior rights.... I should not hide, this was my land, my aina." He took off his shirt and waved it at the helicopter, which ignored him. Looking out over the ocean from a cliff on Kaho'olawe later that evening, he "felt that the presence of my ancestors was very close to me." Maxwell returned to Maui and, in his words, "started this movement of Kahoolawe." [22](#)

25

Maxwell was not alone. In 1975 native Hawaiians on the

nearby island of Moloka'i formed Hui Alaloa (the group of long trails), which soon became important in the fight over Kaho'olawe. Hui Alaloa sought to regain public access to Moloka'i's trails, roads, and beaches, which had been cut off by large landowners involved in economic development. Hui Alaloa was aided by Cravalho, who, as the mayor of Maui County, also sought public beach access. The organization's founders noted that they had "recovered part of the dying Hawai'i culture." Hui Alaloa soon turned its attention to Kaho'olawe, which in the eyes of many native Hawaiians was quickly becoming the preeminent symbol of their oppression. Writing to presidential candidate Jimmy Carter in 1976, Walter Ritte Jr., the head of Hui Alaloa, explained why the bombing seemed so heinous: "The Hawaiian people recognizes Kaho'olawe as a place where their culture is being desecrated as bombs blow up their sacred heiaus, or places of worship, destroy many koas or fishing shrines along the shore, wipe out the historical village site of old, kill the reef surrounding the island which was teeming with food, and especially killing the entire Hawaiian island." Ritte voiced the thoughts of a rapidly growing number of native Hawaiians. "The renaissance, which is going on in Hawaii today has picked Kaho'olawe as the place of revival of a living Hawaiian culture."²³

26

Following the initial work done by ALOHA and Hui Alaloa, formal landings on Kaho'olawe led to the formation of additional organizations and challenges to the navy. Influenced by the 1969 seizure of Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay by Native American militants, native Hawaiian groups sponsored unauthorized—the navy called them "illegal"—landings on Kaho'olawe to protest the bombing and to dramatize their demand for its return to native Hawaiians. In 1976 and 1977 there were, Ritte and Richard Sawyer explained, "five symbolic landings on Kaho'olawe ... chosen to represent the five fingers of limahana (the working hand)."²⁴ The first and fourth landings were probably of most importance.

27

The first landing was timed to coincide with the bicentennial of American independence. Before dawn on January 4, 1976, as Maxwell later recalled, the protesters set out from Maui for Kaho'olawe. Many of those sailing for Kaho'olawe were members

of Hui Alaloa and wanted to secure access to the island for native Hawaiians. Others were fishermen irked by the near-constant closure of the island's waters. Near Kaho'olawe, the group was turned back by the Coast Guard. Nine people, later known as the Kaho'olawe Nine, returned that day to "occupy" the island. Seven were quickly captured, including a Muckleshoot Indian from the Pacific Northwest who was visiting the Hawaiian Islands for a Native Claims Association meeting. But Dr. Noa Aluli and Ritte remained at large for two days.²⁵

28

Within two days of their forced departure from Kaho'olawe, Aluli, Ritte, and George Helm spearheaded the formation of a new group, soon named the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO; '*ohana* means family), which became the leading body in the fight against the navy. The PKO sponsored two more landings in the winter of 1976. Even as the landings occurred, navy officials displayed continued insensitivity to native Hawaiians. In March 1976 they denied a request from five Moloka'i *kpuna* (elders) to visit Kaho'olawe, saying that unexploded ordnance made a visit too dangerous. In the same month a particularly heavy bombing run rattled homes on Maui, alarming the island's residents. A South Maui resident reportedly exclaimed, "We ran out of our house, we thought it was an earthquake." The mayor's office, police stations, and the Coast Guard were deluged with calls asking if a natural disaster had occurred. A bit later, some marines came out with a T-shirt bearing the slogan "Bomb the Kahoolawe Ohana."²⁶

29

Public opinion throughout the Hawaiian Islands began to turn against the navy. As the state's leading newspaper editorialized in early 1976, "It's not a question of whether Kahoolawe will be returned. The question is when." After holding discussions throughout the Hawaiian Islands, members of an investigatory committee of the state legislature concluded that most Hawaiian residents favored the goals of the PKO. Support for the PKO was not unconditional, however. Many people, including many native Hawaiians, disliked the group's tactics. "Many disagreed," the committee concluded, "with the methods of the 'Ohana including trespass and any other law breaking." Several older native Hawaiians said the actions of PKO members "destroyed the dignity and grace for which Hawaiians had long been known."²⁷

The work of the PKO, especially its dramatic landings, helped change attitudes, but so did economic developments. Simply put, the navy was becoming less important to Hawai'i's economy. In 1976 the Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce, the state's leading business organization, came out publicly against the navy's bombing. The chamber had earlier been a staunch supporter of the navy, mainly on economic grounds; but now the organization changed its stance. The growing significance of tourism may well have influenced chamber members, as, like Cravalho, they came to see the bombing as bad for business. The legislative investigatory committee concluded that the navy's claim that the state would suffer large economic losses if the navy abandoned its activities on Kaho'olawe were "unsubstantiated" and should be ignored.²⁸

The campaign to end the bombing broadened as more groups found common cause. Such was not always the case with environmental issues in the Hawaiian Islands in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Native Hawaiians, environmental groups, and developers often found themselves at odds. For example, they differed on the proposed construction of a large geothermal electric power plant on the island of Hawai'i. Many environmentalists favored building the facility as a way to free the Hawaiian Islands from dependence on oil-fired plants, but many native Hawaiians opposed the plant because it would be built in an area considered sacred to their volcano goddess, Pele. No plant was built. Environmentalists, resort developers, and native Hawaiians also disagreed about how to use the Mkena Beach area, a part of South Maui across the strait from Kaho'olawe. Developers wanted to put in a new hotel, native Hawaiians hoped to preserve their shoreline trail, and environmentalists wanted to create a state park, even if doing so meant relocating the trail. Eventually, a compromise was worked out, with Cravalho acting as the mediator. Nonetheless, as late as 1988 Aluli viewed the agreement about Mkena with dismay as "just another compromise for us. It says our culture is for sale, our water's for sale. Our concerns have been sold out." ²⁹

Thus, there were cleavages dividing native Hawaiians, environmentalists, and other Hawaiian residents—but not over ending the use of Kaho'olawe as a firing range. The island's

geography and lack of reliable water supply made resort development unlikely, and native Hawaiians had convinced environmentalists and others that the island was special to them. But many questions remained: How and when might a transfer occur? How would the island be used in the future? And what would cleaning up the island cost? (A new environmental impact statement prepared by the navy in late 1977 suggested that it would cost about \$5,000 per acre to clean up the island, for a total of \$78 to \$131 million, depending on how much land was cleaned—figures the navy stood by two years later.)³⁰ More immediately, there was also the question of how to convince federal government authorities to give up Kaho'olawe and return the island to the state, as navy officials remained adamantly opposed to such an action.

33

George Helm increasingly led the opposition to the navy, especially that of native Hawaiians. Born in 1950, he was raised on rural Moloka'i, the son of a part native Hawaiian father and a native Hawaiian mother. Music was an important part of his life; his father gave him a ukulele and, as one commentator noted, "passed on to George, Jr., his love of Hawaiian music." At the age of fifteen, Helm moved to Honolulu to attend high school. He continued to find time for music, studying as a vocalist with a well-known teacher of Hawaiian chants. Within a few years of graduating from high school, Helm pursued a career in music, playing his ukulele and singing in leading clubs and restaurants in Honolulu. Performing songs important to native Hawaiians was part of his act. That move to performing music full time was a major turning point in his life. From then on, as his mother later observed, Helm "spent any spare time he had reading and researching his Hawaii culture" and traveling to "other islands to meet with the kupunas and Hawaii people to learn first hand all that was true Hawaii." It was a short step for Helm to become an activist after a brother introduced him to the organizers of Hui Alaloa and the PKO. Helm was a bundle of energy; he researched native Hawaiian land claims, spoke at community gatherings, and helped his compatriots when the navy took them to court for trespassing. He was, by all accounts, charismatic, with a lilting, melodic voice that projected well. Beyond Helm's words lay intensity and impatience to get things done, both leavened by a

sense of humor. His message, if often fuzzy, was powerful. When asked in early 1977 about long-range plans for Kaho'olawe, he replied that it would be a "spiritual place" where native Hawaiians could "discover themselves" and "experience the ocean, the aina [land]," a place where he and others might "spread our thoughts out, see and experience ourselves as Hawaiian."[31](#)

34

Two meetings at which Helm presided stand out. At an early 1977 gathering with Hawaiian elders on Maui, Helm overcame initial resistance through music. Originally dismissed as "hippies" and "radicals," Helm and his friends won acceptance by singing old Hawaiian songs. The elders responded positively: "You boys are not radicals, you are *hui o ho'oponopono*, those who will set things right." Later that year, Helm addressed the Hawaiian state legislature—the first time a nonmember had been allowed to do so—and called for the ending of bombing on Kaho'olawe and the return of the island to the state. "Helm moved his audience, some of them to tears," recalled one Hawaiian resident. That same day the House and Senate of the Hawaiian legislature concurred in a resolution urging the navy to halt the bombing and return Kaho'olawe to Hawai'i.[32](#)

35

Nonetheless, navy officers remained intransigent, and federal officials in general dragged their feet, leading to additional organized landings on Kaho'olawe. The fourth landing was destined to be the longest and the most tragic. On January 30, 1977, Helm, Ritte, Sawyer, and two others "invaded" the island. Within a few days, all but Ritte and Sawyer had given themselves up to the authorities. Ritte and Sawyer remained on Kaho'olawe until March 5, when they surrendered by flagging down a navy helicopter. Meanwhile, unaware that they had left the island, Helm returned to Kaho'olawe to aid them, bringing James "Kimo" Mitchell of East Maui. A graduate of Fresno State University, Mitchell was a twenty-five-year-old National Park Service ranger. Helm's party also included Billy Mitchell (no relation to Kimo) and Polo Simeona, a Honolulu fireman who provided a boat. Around 2:30 AM on the morning of March 6, the group set out for Kaho'olawe. Near the island, Helm and the Mitchells went over the side of the boat onto two surfboards.[33](#)

36

On reaching the shore of Kaho'olawe, Helm and the Mitchells began to search for Ritte and Sawyer. When a pickup boat failed to arrive, the three men attempted to paddle the eight miles back to Maui on their surfboards in the very early morning of March 7. What then transpired is unclear. Billy Mitchell, the only survivor, said that he last saw Kimo Mitchell and Helm struggling in the surf near Molokini, an islet in the channel between Kaho'olawe and Maui. Unable to help them, he returned to Kaho'olawe. After hiking across the island, he convinced a group of marines to aid him. By that time, however, almost two days had passed. The navy mounted a search, but no trace of Kimo Mitchell or George Helm was ever found. The weather was stormy, and Helm and the Mitchells were already tired when they attempted to paddle back to Maui. The two men were probably lost at sea.³⁴

37

The deaths of the two activists thrust the PKO into the limelight. Although in disarray after the disappearance of Helm and Mitchell, the PKO and its members soon rallied. A 1978 report by the state government offers an incisive contemporary look at the organization. "The 'Ohana," the report observed, "is not the kind of group that is run on the basis of by-laws or headed by an elected group of officers." It was, instead, "a rather nebulous group held together by the belief in a common goal—the cessation of the bombing of Kaho'olawe and its return to the State of Hawai'i." As the report explained, concepts of *'ohana* (family and cooperation), *aloha 'aina* (love of the land), *pule* (prayers), *na'au* (gut feelings or emotions), and *ho'oponopono* (a desire to make things right) ran through the organization's work. It is difficult to say how many belonged to the PKO and subscribed to those beliefs. A loose organization, the PKO had a membership that fluctuated greatly over time, probably with several hundred members as its core constituency but several thousand as strong supporters.³⁵

38

The PKO encompassed disparate groups. Many native Hawaiian leaders were young, urban, and college-educated—similar to the leaders of some Native American groups such as the American Indian Movement (AIM). But not all PKO members fit that mold. Many who came from rural areas such as Moloka'i had to overcome what one 1977 observer called "a traditional Hawaiian 'crab mentality' and a 'make no waves' ethic."

It was through meetings that PKO members resolved their differences. Older native Hawaiians, or *kpuna*, played significant roles, for many of the younger activists looked to them for instruction in Hawaiian culture. At an important meeting on Moloka'i in April 1977, those present were divided on how to proceed after the deaths of Helm and Mitchell. Ritte appealed to Auntie Clara Ku, the oldest *kpuna* in the room, "Auntie, give us your na'ao." According to a reporter at the meeting, "Out comes a voice like a lioness: 'Have you forgotten yourself?... We are here to save that aina. That aina is being bombed and you all here huki huki [are quarreling] ... we have to listen to our hearts.'" After Ku sat down, the members of the PKO voted unanimously to stand firm on their demand for a six-month cessation of all bombing to allow a joint committee of Hawaiian residents and congressmen to study the situation. [36](#)

39

At many such PKO meetings young and old worked together to alter how Kaho'olawe would be used. Both "heart" and a savvy understanding of federal legislation guided their next steps. As the PKO matured, the body broadened its leadership. Working to advance what was fast becoming their cause, native Hawaiians followed new leaders. Dr. Noa Emmett Aluli and Harry Mitchell typified the diversity of those leaders.

40

Aluli combined urban and rural approaches to activism. Born in 1944, he grew up on O'ahu. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science from Marquette University in Wisconsin in 1966, but drawn to medicine, Aluli returned to his homeland to graduate from the first class of the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawai'i in 1975. After completing his residency in an integrated surgery/family medicine program, Aluli moved to Moloka'i to join the Family Practice Clinic. As Aluli later explained, he hoped "to deliver health care to rural areas." Some of the professors with whom he had studied were "interested in developing an alternative approach, one that was more Hawaiian," which included "*la'au lapa'au*, or the use of herbs." Early on, Aluli was drawn to Hawaiian rights issues and became deeply involved in activism on Moloka'i. Working with Helm and others, Aluli was a founding member of the PKO and a participant in the first landing on Kaho'olawe. He would become a foremost leader of the

PKO in the 1980s and 1990s, eventually heading the commission overseeing the regeneration of Kaho'olawe.³⁷

41

The *kpuna* Harry Mitchell, Kimo Mitchell's father, shared many of Aluli's concerns. He was born in 1919 in Ke'anae, a traditional area in East Maui, and worked as a taro grower, cowboy, fisherman, and hunter. Mitchell also became a renowned native healer skilled in the use of plants and herbs. Active in Hui Alaloa's efforts to gain beach access, he helped start the PKO, becoming especially convinced of Kaho'olawe's significance as a spiritual place for native Hawaiians. Mitchell opposed military exercises on Kaho'olawe, even making a solo surfboard trip to the island to protest shelling and bombing one night in 1982. Most important, Mitchell instructed the younger generation of native Hawaiians in their culture, language, and healing practices. From Mitchell, Aluli learned about the geography of Kaho'olawe, including ancient meanings of place names. Mitchell also connected with Aluli as a native healer. Throughout his work, Mitchell stressed the need to "give back to the aina." Mitchell is perhaps best remembered as the author of the chant/song "Mele o Kaho'olawe," which became the PKO's unofficial anthem. ³⁸

42

Like many others in the PKO, Aluli and Mitchell took the message of native Hawaiian activists abroad. Together they served as ambassadors to nuclear-free-Pacific conferences on the island nations of Fiji and Vanuatu; at one a smiling Mitchell held up a banner reading "No More Hiroshimas." Mitchell also testified on behalf of Green-peace activists in Japan. Aluli, Mitchell, and many other native Hawaiians began to see their work in the Hawaiian Islands as part of a broader movement to remove Western military powers from the Pacific. As people of color, they saw the federal government's efforts to maintain control over Kaho'olawe as a form of cultural repression. Ending the bombing and winning control of the island became part of a Pacific-wide anticolonial movement. In a large rally held in Honolulu on May 26, 1984, "Nuclear Free Pacific" banners intermingled with "Malama K" (Care for Kaho'olawe) and "Aloha Aina" banners. Marchers chanted, "Make the Pacific nuclear-free." The native Hawaiians' campaign had taken on transnational meanings.³⁹



As a founder of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana in the 1970s, Dr. Noa Emmett Aluli carried the message of Hawaiian environmental activists abroad. In the 1990s Aluli became the head of the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, which worked with the navy to clean up the island. *Courtesy Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission.*

Changing Navy Policies and Native Hawaiian Use of Kaho'olawe

While the actions of the PKO raised public consciousness about the bombing of Kaho'olawe, environmental results nonetheless rested on legal decisions and sympathetic judges. In 1976 the PKO filed suits in federal court against the secretary of the navy and the secretary of defense for violating clean air, clean water, historic site, and freedom of religion laws. The suits claimed that the navy's 1972 environmental impact statement was inadequate and that the navy was not complying with an executive order that protected archaeological sites on the island. In 1977 a judge ordered the navy to comply with the executive order and to identify sites on Kaho'olawe that might be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. He told the navy to obtain the secretary of the

interior's opinion on the possible inclusion of the entire island in the National Register. The navy was also instructed to draft a more complete environmental impact statement detailing the results of its activities on Kaho'olawe.⁴⁰

44

In late 1977 navy lawyers responded with a supplement to the 1972 environmental impact statement in which they gave ground very grudgingly. Once again, navy officers rejected alternative bombing sites. "It is concluded," noted the report, that the "U.S. Navy, in conjunction with other users, has no suitable alternative to the use of Kahoolawe as a target site." Pointing out that they had planted trees and eradicated sixteen thousand feral sheep and goats in the 1970s, navy officials praised their own environmental restoration efforts. Navy officials claimed they had also followed a court order directing them to sponsor archaeological work on the island.⁴¹ Nonetheless, public hearings on the supplemental environmental impact statement in 1978 showed just how dissatisfied many Hawaiian residents were with the navy.

45

Members of the PKO led the opposition at the hearings. Walter Ritte offered a detailed critique of the navy's findings, adding that "inside I'm pissed off" and that "the credibility of the United States Navy stinks!" Like Ritte, Aluli denounced the navy for violating federal laws and orders. At the close of his testimony Aluli stated, "Listen. Stop the bombing, cross the cultural gap. You're big enough and powerful enough. We are a rising nation, and we are going to be recognized." Isaac Hall, who was beginning his distinguished career as an environmental lawyer, testified on behalf of the PKO that "basically, we have pitted the national military needs of the Navy against the cultural needs of the people of Hawaii."⁴²

46

Members of other native Hawaiian and environmental organizations echoed the sentiments of the PKO. After asking for "a few seconds of silence for Brother George Helm and Brother Kimo Mitchell," a representative of Hui Alaloa observed that "it is my firm belief that we Hawaiians today have every right to walk and hunt our mountains, to fish and surf and camp on our beaches." Similar testimony came from members of the Hawaii Coalition of Native Claims and the Mama Loa Foundation. Life of

the Land representatives condemned the navy for callous treatment of animal and plant life. A representative of the Sierra Club called the bombing a "sad display of natural and archaeological destruction" and drew an analogy adopted by an increasing number of Hawaiian residents. "Kahoolawe is," he said, "in a very real sense the Plymouth Rock of the Polynesian pilgrims who came to Hawaii."⁴³

47

Faced with hostile testimony, in 1979 the navy accepted a consent decree that set new rules for the use of Kaho'olawe. Endorsed by the PKO, the federal court decree began a period of joint use of Kaho'olawe by the navy and native Hawaiians in 1980. The decree stipulated that the navy clear approximately one-third of the island's surface of all ordnance. The PKO was to select the areas to be cleared according to their significance in "restoring the religious, cultural, historic and environmental values of Kaho'olawe." Moreover, the navy was to give the PKO access to Kaho'olawe for at least four days each month, ten months of the year, for religious, cultural, scientific, and educational purposes. More than that, the navy was to submit an application to list all of Kaho'olawe on the National Register to the secretary of the interior. A few months after the navy signed the consent decree, the island was so listed. The navy was ordered to eradicate all goats still on the island, implement a soil conservation program, begin revegetation, and draw up a management plan for the surrounding ocean waters. Finally, the navy was told to recognize members of the PKO as stewards of Kaho'olawe.⁴⁴

48

With the consent decree, a jubilant PKO won a major victory. In 1982 native Hawaiians reinstituted *Makahiki* celebrations, end-of-the-year festivities of peace, relaxation, and religion, on the island. By 1992 some four thousand people had visited Kaho'olawe, mainly for spiritual and educational purposes. That fall, cultural ceremonies rededicated Kaho'olawe as a center for the spiritual well-being of the Hawaiian people. Still, there was nothing in the consent decree to prevent the navy from using parts of Kaho'olawe for gunnery and bombing, and it reserved about one-third of the island as a firing range.⁴⁵

49

Rim of the Pacific (RimPac) exercises, which involved the

bombardment of Kaho'olawe by the navies of the United States and its Pacific allies every two years, particularly irked those trying to end military use of the island. The 1982 exercises led to a protest landing by PKO and Greenpeace members in kayaks, causing the navies of Australia and New Zealand to stop firing on the island. In the wake of the 1982 exercise, the PKO sought international help. In 1983 PKO members met with members of the South Pacific Peoples Foundation, who were deeply involved in efforts to stop nuclear testing in the Pacific. Aluli denounced the 1984 RimPac exercises for failing to protect Hawaiian sites on Kaho'olawe, leading Japanese leaders to forbid their ships to fire on the island. But the 1988 RimPac exercises sparked the most protests. Joined by PKO members, Hannibal Tavares, the mayor of Maui County, landed on Kaho'olawe during a lull in the military maneuvers, planted a county flag on the island, and called upon the navy to return the island to the people of Hawai'i. Accompanied by Harry Mitchell, Tavares toured parts of the island, attentive to Mitchell's admonition: "from the land alone can come life, not out of cement," a derogatory reference to resort development taking place on Maui.⁴⁶

50

Political action followed the protests. Pushed by Sen. Daniel Akaka of Hawai'i and supported by Senator Inouye, who then headed the Senate Defense Appropriation Committee, a measure creating the Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission (KICC) was passed by the Senate and approved by the House in 1990. The commission was designed to recommend terms for the return of Kaho'olawe to the state of Hawai'i. At the same time, President George H. W. Bush instructed the secretary of defense to end use of Kaho'olawe as a firing and bombing range. That temporary halt was later made permanent, and after 1990 no bombs or shells fell on Kaho'olawe. With Tavares as its chair and Aluli as its vice-chair, the KICC held public hearings throughout the Hawaiian Islands in 1991 to encourage further discussion of the island's future. Those once in opposition now ran the show, and their leadership created a new tenor at the hearings. Tavares urged those testifying to "speak from the mind and the heart" in "any language you want, Hawaiian, Portuguese, Japanese, Filipino, whatever." He then called upon native Hawaiian elders to begin the meeting with prayers and chants.⁴⁷

Testimony strongly favored ending military use. A representative of the PKO stated what was on the minds of many native Hawaiians, arguing that "the aina is alive with mana [power], and we all know that it is wounded, and we need to heal it." Dana Hall, a native Hawaiian activist on Maui and the wife of the environmental lawyer Isaac Hall, called for "a complete cessation of military use" and the immediate return of the island to the state of Hawai'i "prior to its ultimate conveyance to a sovereign Native Hawaiian entity." Charles Maxwell voiced similar sentiments. Politicians of every stripe, representatives of the Sierra Club, members of the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union, and officers of the Maui Historical Society supported the testimony of native Hawaiians. Most poignant was the testimony of Inez Ashdown, the last living descendant of Kaho'olawe's ranchers. Ill and unable to attend the hearings, the ninety-two-year-old Ashdown had a priest present her testimony. The priest began by noting that Ashdown was one of the few people alive who had known the Kingdom of Hawai'i's last queen, Lili'uokalani. "Though her body is very weak and old," the priest said, Ashdown "speaks vehemently against those who have hurt [Kaho'olawe], those who have destroyed it."[48](#)

In the testimony at hearings and the results of a 1992 statewide public opinion poll, the KICC found overwhelming support for an end to military use of Kaho'olawe. Some 77 percent of the 252 people testifying at the public hearings, as well as 71 percent of 1,200 Hawaiian residents chosen at random for polling by the governor of Hawai'i's Office of State Planning, wanted to halt all military activity immediately. Of those testifying, 79 percent thought Kaho'olawe should be given into the stewardship of the PKO and held by the state of Hawai'i until some form of native Hawaiian sovereignty was recognized. Of those polled, 77 percent believed Kaho'olawe should be relinquished to their state government. Only 45 percent of those polled wanted the PKO to manage the island (40 percent wanted the state government to do so). A poll of 2,000 Hawaiian residents in the February 1992 edition of *Honolulu Magazine* showed similar results. The poll showed "nearly universal agreement" that the "best thing about Kaho'olawe" was "the efforts to save the island/stop the

bombing."⁴⁹

53

The polls and hearings revealed remarkable support for the PKO and native Hawaiians — support that had been much less widespread just ten or fifteen years earlier. To explain the growing sympathy for the PKO, one must examine changes in Hawai'i and the world. First and foremost was the work of native Hawaiians themselves. Their landings, along with the deaths of George Helm and Kimo Mitchell, dramatized and simplified issues about Kaho'olawe for many residents of the Hawaiian Islands; Helm and Mitchell became unquestioned icons for those in the movement. Moreover, the growing maturity of the native Hawaiian renaissance, especially the PKO's increasing reliance on lawsuits, made native Hawaiian demands seem less radical.

54

The PKO's changing approach won acceptance from other Hawaiian residents. Even as they benefited from the federal government's spending in their islands, such as its support of military establishments, Hawaiian residents resented what they saw as their colonial, second-rank status. Such a reaction should not be surprising. Many residents of the American West harbored deep resentments and suspicions of the federal government even though the region had benefited inordinately from federal spending. The Sagebrush Rebellion of the 1970s and 1980s is perhaps the best-known manifestation of this feeling. Rebels in western states such as Nevada demanded that the federal government give vast tracts of the public domain to the states, presumably to be sold to private purchasers. Permeating the opposition of Hawaiian politicians to the navy's bombing of Kaho'olawe was a desire to take control away from the federal government.⁵⁰ Yet some Hawaiian residents backed the PKO for other reasons. Environmentalists, whose numbers greatly increased in Hawai'i during the 1980s and 1990s, saw in the movement to end the bombing a major issue. While they might not have agreed with native Hawaiians about every detail of Kaho'olawe's future, they could easily agree that the bombing should stop.

55

Finally, the navy was at times its own worst enemy. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the navy fought all efforts to limit its use of Kaho'olawe, giving ground only when forced.

Consistently arguing that no other spot in the Pacific had Kaho'olawe's advantages for live-fire exercises, the navy stuck to its guns even as the world around it changed. As the role of the United States in Vietnam ended in the 1970s, and as the Soviet Union disintegrated and the Cold War wound down in the 1980s and 1990s, the unwavering stance of the navy seemed increasingly anachronistic to many Hawaiian residents. The navy simply became less relevant to their lives. Fewer and fewer Hawaiian residents were willing to accept the navy's argument that bombing Kaho'olawe was essential to the nation's security. In addition, the relative importance of military spending to the economy of the Hawaiian Islands decreased, making it easier for Hawaiian residents to forsake the navy. To some, the navy's bombing of Kaho'olawe even seemed to threaten desired touristic development on nearby Maui.

56

In its final report to the federal government, the KICC announced its "major finding": Kaho'olawe was "a special place with unique and important cultural, archaeological, historical, and environmental resources"; it recommended that all "commercial activity and exploitation of resources" be prohibited. Moreover, the KICC concluded "that all military use of Kaho'olawe must cease, and that the State of Hawai'i must guarantee in perpetuity that the island and its surrounding water be used exclusively for the practice of traditional and contemporary Hawaiian culture, including religion—and for educational and scientific purposes." The KICC asked that Kaho'olawe be returned to the state "without conditions" and that the federal government "be responsible for the removal of unexploded ordnance ... and that the island be restored to a condition reasonably safe for human habitation and human use." The KICC's recommendations hearkened back to President Eisenhower's 1953 order, which stated that Kaho'olawe would someday be returned to Hawai'i in an appropriate condition for civilian use.⁵¹

57

The Return of Kaho'olawe

In mid-1994 the federal government transferred its claims to Kaho'olawe to the state of Hawai'i and agreed to clear unexploded ordnance and complete restoration within ten years. While the cleanup was under way, the navy would control access to the island in close consultation with state officials. A congressional appropriation of \$400 million would pay for the cleanup. After a decade, the navy would transfer all control to the state. State actions reinforced those of the federal government; Hawai'i established the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve, consisting of the island and its surrounding waters, for education, the protection of archaeological sites, habitat restoration, and the preservation of native Hawaiian cultural, spiritual, and subsistence practices. No commercial uses were allowed. State legislation also set up the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) to lead the cleanup in cooperation with the navy. Aluli, the former PKO activist, became the chair of the KIRC and was joined by other PKO members. The KIRC recognized the PKO as "the landowner of the island, holding it in trust for the sovereign native Hawaiian entity when it is re-established and recognized by the state and federal governments."⁵²



The restoration of Kaho'olawe in the 1990s involved revegetation with plants native to Hawai'i (as seen here), the removal of ordnance, and the control of erosion. Federal efforts to clean up the island ended in November 2003. *Courtesy Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission.*

Meanwhile, in a use plan promulgated in late 1995, the KIRC set policies on how thoroughly the different sections of the island should be cleaned. According to agreements between the federal and state governments, approximately one-quarter of Kaho'olawe's surface was to be cleared of ordnance so that it would be completely suitable for human use. Roughly three-quarters of the island was to be made reasonably safe. Working closely with the PKO, the KIRC listed thirteen areas for complete cleanup. After the land was cleared of ordnance, it was to be restored by controlling erosion, reintroducing native plant species, and recharging water tables. The KIRC's plan also designated areas for the establishment of educational centers/work camps, overnight campsites, cultural/historical preserves, and botanical/wildlife preserves.⁵³

59

Both the navy and the KIRC felt increasing pressure to meet the cleanup deadline of 2003, which resulted in a change in priorities. While the KIRC initially insisted that the surface of the entire island be cleaned, it later agreed to the cleaning of 70 percent. The KIRC also agreed to less below-the-surface cleaning, selecting only those places that would be in high use. Federal efforts ended in November 2003 after about 60 percent of Kaho'olawe's surface and 7 percent of its subsurface had been cleaned up. Management of access to the island was finally turned over to the state of Hawai'i. Kaho'olawe was well on its way to becoming a cultural, religious, and educational center for Hawaiians.⁵⁴

60

Conclusions

The campaign to end military use of Kaho'olawe illuminates the development of environmentalism, particularly within the United States. Environmentalism, as distinct from conservation movements, developed as part of U.S. consumerism during the 1960s and 1970s. Americans came to regard a clean environment as almost a birthright, similar to their right to possess advanced consumer goods such as color televisions. The historian Samuel P.

Hays wrote, "Environmentalism was a part of the history of consumption that stressed new aspects of the American standard of living." ⁵⁵ As might be expected, local environmental groups composed mainly of middle-class Caucasians, with the aid of local politicians, mounted the first major opposition to the navy's bombing of Kaho'olawe. The island's degradation did not fit in with the advanced consumer society they desired. It was not that they wanted to build shopping malls on the island. Instead many of them, such as Cravalho, hoped that the island could be used (consumed) as a place for leisure activities such as fishing or hunting. They also saw a halt to bombing as a boon to the development of tourism on Maui.

61

Many native Hawaiians saw matters differently, and their entrance on the environmental stage during the mid-1970s changed the nature of the campaign against the navy. Many thought of the island first as a spiritual and cultural home and only second as a place for hunting, fishing, and picnicking. They sought cultural renewal as well as environmental restoration; no hotels, no resorts, and no appurtenances of consumerism should be allowed. There would be no organized bicycle rides down Kaho'olawe's hills, nothing like Maui's popular eco-tourism bicycling. A KIRC commissioner spoke for many native Hawaiians when she contrasted the restoration of Kaho'olawe as an undeveloped, spiritual place with what she viewed as the unfortunate runaway touristic development of nearby Maui. Kaho'olawe, she observed, "has a basis of culture that does not require condominiums, does not require cement walkways." ⁵⁶ The landings of native Hawaiians in the 1970s, along with their work through the courts in later decades, convinced both Hawaiian residents and environmentalists that Kaho'olawe had special meaning for native Hawaiians and that they should become stewards of the island.

62

The environmental activism of native Hawaiians resembled the environmental justice movement of the 1970s and later. Garbage dumps, electric power plants, sewer facilities, and hazardous waste sites seemed to find locations near Indian reservations and in lower-income, often black and Hispanic, urban areas. By 1988, about forty-seven hundred local groups had formed across the United States to protest the placements. The environmental justice

movement was also interested in changing workplace conditions. As the scholar Robert Gottlieb has written, the movement began "to shift the definition of environmentalism away from the exclusive focus on consumption to the sphere of work and production."⁵⁷ In environmental justice matters native Hawaiians faced some of the same challenges as other minorities in the United States. For native Hawaiians, the continued destruction of their land, the island of Kaho'olawe, by the outside force of the U.S. Navy came to symbolize all that was wrong with how they had been treated by Americans for a century.

63

Because of its emphasis on the spiritual and cultural value of the land, the native Hawaiian version of environmentalism differed from the environmental justice movement. The efforts of native Hawaiians to reassert control over Kaho'olawe closely resembled the work of other indigenous peoples—ranging from Native Americans to Maori in New Zealand to Chamoru on Guam—to regain lands lost to Western powers. Many native Hawaiians certainly came to see their work as part of a larger transnational anticolonial movement and do so to the present day. The native Hawaiian effort to "heal" Kaho'olawe stressed the sacredness of the earth and was incompatible with efforts to put the island to economically productive, or even environmentally friendly, use. As Helm wrote in an introspective piece never intended for publication, "My veins are carrying the blood of a people who understand the sacredness of the land and water. This is my culture & no matter how remote the past is, it does not make my culture extinct." He concluded, "We are Hawaiians first, activists second." While inclined to romanticize the lives and thoughts of the Hawaiians who had once lived on Kaho'olawe (for Hawaiians' actions, especially their agricultural plantings, had begun altering the island well before the first westerners arrived), Helm voiced sentiments shared by other leaders of Pacific peoples. Like Helm, they partially mythologized the pasts of their groups as a way of understanding, and achieving goals in, the present.⁵⁸

64

Notes

Mansel G. Blackford is a professor of history at the Ohio State University. I would like to thank William Childs, Stewart Firth, Hal Friedman, James Kraft, Lucy Murphy, Dorothy Pyle, Mark Rose, Randy Roth, David Stebenne, Richard Tucker, Judy Wu, and three anonymous readers for this journal for commenting on drafts of this article. Joanne Meyerowitz deserves my special thanks for valuable suggestions on multiple drafts of this article. I presented an early version of this essay, "Environmentalism and Native Hawaiian Rights in the Restoration of Kaho'olawe, Hawai'i, 1969–2003," at the annual meeting of the American Society for Environmental History, Providence, Rhode Island, March 26–30, 2003.

Readers may contact Blackford at <blackford.1@osu.edu>

¹ U.S. Navy, *Final Environmental Statement concerning the Military Use of the Kahoolawe Target Complex in the Hawaiian Archipelago* [February 1972] (n.p., n.d.), 2–4. For a year-by-year chronicle of Kaho'olawe, see Walter M. Barnard, *Kaho'olawe* (Fredonia, 1996). For a guide to sources, see Marilyn Naito, *Kaho'olawe: An Annotated Bibliography* (Honolulu, 1987). Some Hawaiian words and names call for the use of diacritic marks. Although I have not added diacritic marks when they did not exist in the original, as in quotations or book and article titles, elsewhere I have generally followed Sonia P. Juvic and James O. Juvic, eds., *Atlas of Hawai'i* (Honolulu, 1998); and Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, *New Pocket Hawaiian Dictionary* (Honolulu, 1992).

² George Helm, "Notes," 1977, file 7, box 1, George Helm Collection (Hawaiiana Room, Hamilton Library, University of Hawai'i, Mnoa); "Kaho'olawe Island Reserve: A Hawaiian Cultural Sanctuary," *Manoa*, 7 (Summer 1995), 18. On the importance of Kaho'olawe to the native Hawaiian rights movement and to Hawaiian politics in general, see Tom Coffman, *The Island Edge of America: A Political History of Hawai'i* (Honolulu, 2003), 299–304, esp. 304. For overviews of Hawaiian history, see Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, 1968); and Lawrence Fuchs, *Hawaii Pono: A Social History* (New York, 1961). More recent accounts include Elizabeth Buck, *Paradise Remade: The Politics of Culture and History in Hawai'i* (Philadelphia, 1993); and Noel J. Kent, *Hawaii: Islands under the Influence* (Honolulu, 1993).

³ On the approaches and topics of environmental history, see Char Miller and Hal Rothman, eds., *Out of the Woods: Essays in Environmental History* (Pittsburgh, 1997). On recent worldwide environmental issues, see J. R. McNeill, *Something New under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth Century World* (New York, 2000); and Ted Steinberg, *Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History* (New York, 2002). See also Hal Rothman, "A Decade in the Saddle: Confessions of a Recalcitrant Editor," *Environmental History*, 7 (Jan. 2002), 9–21; and Paul Sutter, "Reflections: What Can U.S. Environmental Historians Learn from Non-U.S. Environmental Historians?," *ibid.*, 8 (Jan. 2003), 107–29. On links between social and cultural changes in modern America and the growth of environmentalism, see Samuel P. Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955–1985* (Cambridge, Eng., 1987).

On linkages among consumerism, politics, and environmentalism, see Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York, 2003), esp. 345–97. On the literature, see Carolyn Merchant, *The Columbia Guide to American Environmental History* (New York, 2002). Adam Rome, "'Give Earth a Chance': The Environmental Movement and the Sixties," *Journal of American History*, 90 (Sept. 2003), 525–54, esp. 527. On the relationships between suburban development and environmentalism after World War II, see Adam Rome, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism* (Cambridge, Eng., 2001). Carolyn Merchant, "Shades of Darkness: Race and Environmental History," *Environmental History*, 8 (July 2003), 380–94, esp. 380.

⁴ See Robert Bullard, *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Justice* (Boulder, 1990); Luke Cole and Sheila Foster, *From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement* (New York, 2001); Richard Hofrichter, ed., *Toxic Struggles: The Theory and Practice of Environmental Justice* (Salt Lake City, 2002); Martin Melosi, "Equity, Eco-Racism, and Environmental History," *Environmental History Review*, 19 (Fall 1995), 1–16; David Pellow, *Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago* (Cambridge, Mass., 2002); and David Pellow and Lisa Park, *The Silicon Valley of Dreams: Environmental Injustice, Immigrant Workers, and the High-Tech Global Economy* (New York, 2002).

⁵ Relationships between Native Americans and environmentalism are complex. Some tribes, such as the Western Shoshone, have sought to protect their lands from environmental degradation. See Matthew Glass, "Air Force, Western Shoshone, and Mormon Rhetoric of Place and the MX Conflict," in *The Atomic West*, ed. Bruce Hevly and John M. Findlay (Seattle, 1998), 255–75. Other tribes have sought waste sites for their reservations to boost tribal income. See Shepard Krech III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York, 1999), 211–29. See also Brett Clark, "The Indigenous Environmental Movement in the United States: Transcending Borders in Struggles against Mining, Manufacturing, and the Capitalist State," *Organization and Environment*, 15 (Dec. 2002), 410–42; and Patrick Impero Wilson, "Native Peoples and the Management of Natural Resources in the Pacific Northwest: A Comparative Assessment," *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 32 (Autumn 2002), 397–414. On how four tribes in Canada and the United States negotiated mining agreements for their lands, see Saleem H. Ali, *Mining, the Environment, and Indigenous Development Conflicts* (Tucson, 2003).

⁶ In the rethinking of Pacific history, especially Pacific island history, several themes stand out: the need to view Pacific history through non-Western eyes; the need to explain the growing integration of the Pacific as a major region (one-third of the globe), especially from the mid-1800s onward; and the need to examine interactions among Pacific peoples, flora and fauna, and economies. See Greg Denning, "History 'in' the Pacific," *Contemporary Pacific*, 1 (Spring–Fall 1989), 134–39; Arif Dirik, "The Asia-Pacific Idea: Reality and Representation in the Invention of a Regional Structure," *Journal of World History*, 3 (Spring 1992), 55–79; Ben Finney, "The Other One-Third of the Globe," *ibid.*, 5 (Fall 1994),

273–98; J. R. McNeill, "Of Rats and Men: A Synoptic Environmental History of the Island Pacific," *ibid.*, 299–349; K. R. Howard, "Pacific Islands History in the 1980s: New Directions or Monograph Myopia?," *Pacific Studies*, 3 (Fall 1979), 81–90; Wolfgang Kempf, "Cosmologies, Cities, and Cultural Constructions of Space: Oceanic Enlargements of the World," *ibid.*, 22 (June 1999), 97–114; Terence Wesley-Smith, "Rethinking Pacific Islands Studies," *ibid.*, 18 (June 1995), 115–37; R. G. Ward, "Earth's Empty Quarter? The Pacific Islands in a Pacific Century," *Geographical Journal*, 155 (July 1989), 235–46; Robert Borofsky, ed., *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to Remake History* (Honolulu, 2000); Donald Denoon et al., eds., *The Cambridge History of the Pacific Islanders* (New York, 1997); and K. R. Howe, Robert C. Kiste, and Brij V. Lal, eds., *Tides of History: The Pacific Islands in the Twentieth Century* (Honolulu, 1994). For a close look at environmental change in the Pacific, see J. R. McNeill, ed., *Environmental History in the Pacific World* (Aldershot, 2001). On the American presence as an integrating force, see Jean Heffer, *The United States and the Pacific: History of a Frontier*, trans. W. Donald Wilson (Notre Dame, 2002); Roger Buckley, *The United States in the Asia-Pacific since 1945* (Cambridge, Eng., 2002); and Hal Friedman, *Creating an American Lake: United States Imperialism and Strategic Security in the Pacific Basin, 1945–47* (Westport, 2001). On the migrations of Pacific peoples, see Paul Spickard, Joanne L. Rondilla, and Debbie Hippolite Wright, eds., *Pacific Diaspora: Island Peoples in the United States and across the Pacific* (Honolulu, 2002). On tourism, see Michel Picard and Robert E. Wood, eds., *Tourism, Ethnicity, and the State in Asian and Pacific Societies* (Honolulu, 1997).

⁷ Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, "Use Plan, December 1995," *Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission* <<http://www.hawaii.gov/kirc/>> , pp. 17–30 (June 17, 2002). See also Peter MacDonald, "Fixed in Time: A Brief History of Kahoolawe," *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 6 (1972), 69–90. On the early history of Kaho'olawe, see a report prepared for the Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission: Pauline N. King, "A Local History of Kaho'olawe Island: Tradition, Development, and World War," typescript, 1993 (Hamilton Library, University of Hawai'i, Mnoa). For archaeologists' views on the settlement of Kaho'olawe, see Patrick Vinton Kirch, *Feathered Gods and Fishhooks: An Introduction to Hawaiian Archaeology and Prehistory* (Honolulu, 1985), 153–54. See also O. A. Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization: Germs and Genocide in Hawai'i* (Honolulu, 1993); O. A. Bushnell, "'The Horror' Reconsidered: An Evaluation of the Historical Evidence for Population Decline in Hawai'i, 1778–1803," *Pacific Studies*, 16 (Sept. 1993), 115–61; Thegn Ladefoged, "Hawaiian Dryland Agricultural Intensification and the Pacific Economy," *ibid.* (June 1993), 119–31; Tom Dye, "Population Trends in Hawai'i before 1778," *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 28 (1994), 1–21; Robert Schmitt and Eleanor Nordyke, "Death in Hawai'i: The Epidemics of 1848–49," *ibid.*, 35 (2001), 1–14; and David Stannard, *Before the Horror: The Population of Hawai'i on the Eve of Western Contact* (Honolulu, 1989). For the population of Kaho'olawe, see Robert C. Schmitt and Carole L. Silva, "Population Trends on Kahoolawe," *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 18 (1984), 39–46. Very recent discoveries suggest a higher estimate for Kaho'olawe population; see Maui News, March 6, 2004, p. 1.

⁸ Noa Emmett Aluli and Daviana Pmaika'i McGregor, "Mai Ke Mai Ke Ola, From the Ocean Comes Life: Hawaiian Customs, Uses, and Practices on Kaho'olawe Relating to the Surrounding Ocean," *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 26 (1992), 231–54. On the meaning of Kaho'olawe for ancient Hawaiians, see also a report prepared for the U.S. Navy: T. P. Keene, "Kaho'olawe Island, Hawaii Ethnic Significance," typescript, 1985 (Hamilton Library). On the beauty of Kaho'olawe and what the island means to some native Hawaiians, see Rowland B. Reeve, comp., *Kaho'olawe: Na Leo o Kanaoloa* (Kaho'olawe: The voices of Kanaoloa [Kanaoloa is the ancient name for Kaho'olawe]) (Honolulu, 1995).

⁹ On the early flora and fauna, see Sherwin Carlquist, *Hawaii: A Natural History* (Lawa'i, 1980), preface; George Cox, *Alien Species in North America and Hawaii* (Washington, 1999), 173–87; and Kenneth Nagata, "Early Plant Introductions in Hawai'i," *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 19 (1985), 35–61. On early changes brought by westerners, see a report prepared for the Hawaiian legislature: State of Hawai'i, "Kaho'olawe: Aloha No: A Legislative History of the Island of Kaho'olawe," typescript, 1978, pp. 40–41 (Hamilton Library). More generally, see Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (Cambridge, Eng., 1986). On more recent developments, see Yvonne Baskin, *A Plague of Rats and Rubbervines: The Growing Threat of Species Invasions* (Washington, 2002). On early-day ranching, see Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission, *Kaho'olawe Island: Restoring a Cultural Treasure: Final Report of the Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission to the Congress of the United States, March 31, 1993* (Wailuku, 1993), 19, 24. For the most accurate estimate of ungulates on the island, see Hardy Spoehr, *Kaho'olawe's Forest Reserve Period, 1910–1918* (Wailuku, 1992), 3.

¹⁰ Exec. Order no. 10,436, 18 Fed. Reg. 1051 (Feb. 20, 1953), reprinted in Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission, *Restoring a Cultural Treasure*, 110.

¹¹ Thomas Hitch, *Islands in Transition: The Past, Present, and Future of Hawaii's Economy* (Honolulu, 1992), 171–73, 198–201; Kathy Ferguson and Phyllis Turnbull, *Oh Say, Can You See? The Semiotics of the Military in Hawai'i* (Minneapolis, 1999).

¹² U.S. Navy, *Final Environmental Statement concerning the Military Use of the Kahoolawe Target Complex*, 2–4; "Navy Calls Operation Sailor Hat a Rocking Success," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, June 24, 1965.

¹³ Mansel G. Blackford, *Fragile Paradise: The Impact of Tourism on Maui, 1959–2000* (Lawrence, 2001); Bryan H. Farrell, *Hawaii: The Legend That Sells* (Honolulu, 1982). On the historic pros and cons of tourism for host communities in the American West, see Hal Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence, 1998).

¹⁴ Dorothy Pyle interview by Mansel G. Blackford, Sept. 17, 2003, audiotape (in Mansel G. Blackford's possession), side 1, tape 1; *Maui News*, Feb. 12, 1969, p. 8; *Sunday Honolulu Star-Bulletin and Advertiser*, Feb. 9, 1969, p. A-1.

¹⁵ *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, Sept. 15, 1969, p. B-1; *ibid.*, March 2, 1970, p. A-13; *ibid.*, June 8, 1970, p. D-20; *ibid.*, Oct. 30, 1971, p. A-3; *Maui News*, Nov. 23, 1971, p. 1; Elmer Cravalho interview by Blackford, July 16, 2002, audiotape (in Blackford's possession), side 1, tape 1.

¹⁶ "Minutes of the Meetings of the Maui County Council," Oct. 3, 1969, Jan. 16, 1970, March 19, 1971 (Office of the County Clerk for Maui County, Wailuku, Hawai'i); *Honolulu Advertiser*, Oct. 4, 1969, p. D-8.

¹⁷ *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, Oct. 30, 1971, p. A-3; *Maui News*, July 31, 1971, p. 1.

¹⁸ U.S. Navy, *Final Environmental Statement concerning the Military Use of the Kahoolawe Target Complex*, 1, 15, 30.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1, 14, 15, 23–30; *Maui News*, Dec. 11, 1971, p. C-8; Pyle interview, side 1, tape 1.

²⁰ See especially Haunani-Kay Trask, "The Birth of the Modern Hawaiian Movement: Kalama Valley, O'ahu," *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 21 (1987), 126–53, esp. 126–27. See also Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa, "The Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement: An Update from Honolulu," *Journal of Pacific History*, 28 (Fall 1993), 214–18; Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i* (Honolulu, 1993); and Robert Mast and Anne Mast, *Autobiography of Protest in Hawai'i* (Honolulu, 1996), 353–428.

²¹ For a valuable comparative account, see Linda S. Parker, *Native American Estate: The Struggle over Indian and Hawaiian Lands* (Honolulu, 1989). On Native American cultural renewal, see Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York, 1996), 187–212. For an inside look at Native American activism, see Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York, 1996). On Maori efforts to regain lands and treaty rights on New Zealand, see Jean Rosenfeld, *The Island Broken in Two Halves: Land and Renewal Movements among the Maori of New Zealand* (University Park, 1999); Alan Ward, "Interpreting the Treaty of Waitangi: The Maori Resurgence and Race Relations in New Zealand," *Contemporary Pacific*, 3 (Spring 1991), 85–115; and Alan Ward, "Treaty-Related Research and Versions of New Zealand History," in *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts*, ed. Borofsky, 401–19.

²² "County Council Minutes," Sept. 7, 1973 (Office of the County Clerk for Maui County); Charles Maxwell, "Public Testimony on the Navy's Revised Environmental Impact Statement," April 10, 1978, file 9, box 1, Navy Kahoolawe Collection (Maui Historical Society, Wailuku, Hawai'i).

²³ Walter Ritte Jr. and Richard Sawyer, *Na Mana'o O Kaho'olawe* (Meaning of Kaho'olawe) (Honolulu, 1978), 106–7; and Walter Ritte Jr. to Jimmy Carter, July 6, 1976, file 5, box 1, Helm Collection.

²⁴ Ritte and Sawyer, *Na Mana'o O Kaho'olawe*, 3.

²⁵ Maxwell, "Public Testimony on the Navy's Revised Environmental Impact Statement"; Francis Norris, "Kaho'olawe: Island of Opportunity" (M.A. thesis, University of Hawai'i, 1992), 92–97; Myra Jean F. Tuggle, "The Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana: Cultural Revitalization in a Contemporary Hawaiian Movement" (M.A. thesis, University of Hawai'i, 1982), 44–45.

²⁶ Norris, "Kaho'olawe," 93; Tuggle, "Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana," 45; "Fund-Raising Luau Set for Anti-Bombing Group," *Maui News*, March 10, 1976; "Mauians All Shook Up by Bombing of Island," *ibid.*, March 12, 1976.

²⁷ *Honolulu Sunday Advertiser*, Jan. 11, 1976, p. 2; State of Hawai'i, "Kaho'olawe: Aloha No," 50–51, 174. The report does not say how many people took part in the committee-sponsored discussions or who they were.

²⁸ State of Hawai'i, "Kaho'olawe: Aloha No," 74, 242.

²⁹ Blackford, *Fragile Paradise*, 44–80, 139–69. See Brett Uprichard, "Interview with Dr. Emmett Aluli," *Honolulu*, 22 (July 1988), 10.

³⁰ *Honolulu Star-Bulletin and Advertiser*, Dec. 23, 1979, p. A-3; State of Hawai'i, "Kaho'olawe" Aloha No," 50.

³¹ Rodney Morales, "George Helm—The Voice and Soul," in *Ho'i Ho'i Hou: A Tribute to George Helm and Kimo Mitchell*, ed. Rodney Morales (Honolulu, 1984), 11–33, esp. 11. Morales later published a novel featuring a character closely modeled on Helm, at least to my eyes. See Rodney Morales, *When the Shark Bites* (Honolulu, 2002). See also Auntie Mae Helm, "George Helm: A Profile of the Man and His Music," in *Na Mana'o O Kaho'olawe*, by Ritte and Sawyer, xvi; and Catherine Kekoa Enomoto, "Hawaiian Treasure," *'O'o Pulekina*, 24 (April 1996), n.p. Helm's charisma may be sensed in two videotapes of him speaking and singing based on news clips from 1975–1977: *Enduring Pride: E Mau Ana ka Ha'aheo* (videotape; Juniroa Productions, 1987), vol. 7; and *Kaho'olawe: Aloha 'Aina—George Helm* (videotape; N Maka o K 'Aina, 1978). He performs 24 songs on George Helm, *The Music of George Helm: A True Hawaiian* (compact disk; Cord International HOCD 3000; 1996). For valuable contemporary accounts, see Pam Smith, "The Ohana: Birth of a Nation or Band-Aid Brigade?," *Hawaii Observer*, May 19, 1977, pp. 19–25; Pam Smith, "Kahoolawe: Hawaiians on Trial," *ibid.*, July 28, 1977, pp. 14–15; and Jimmy Shimabukuro, "Kahoolawe: A Different Meaning," *ibid.*, March 10, 1977, p. 9.

³² Morales, "George Helm," 22, 25; State of Hawai'i, "Kaho'olawe: Aloha No," 15–26.

³³ On this landing, see Norris, "Kaho'olawe," 103–4; Tuggle, "Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana," 46–47; Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, "Official Statement," Feb. 1, 1977,

file 7, box 1, Helm Collection; and State of Hawai'i, "Kaho'olawe: Aloha No," 51. On developments on March 5–7, 1977, see Morales, "George Helm," 29–32; and *Maui News*, March 9, 1977, p. 1.

³⁴ Some family members and friends suspect that foul play occurred, even that the two men were murdered. See Leonani Puhukoa interview by Blackford, July 23, 2002, audiotape (in Blackford's possession), side 1, tape 1. On reactions to the deaths, see *Maui News*, March 14, 1977, p. 1; and Smith, "Ohana," 22–25.

³⁵ State of Hawai'i, "Kaho'olawe: Aloha No," esp. 65; Tuggle, "Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana," 74–80.

³⁶ Smith, "Ohana," 19, 25. Women were important to the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO). Few took part in the landings, but many were active in networking, organizing rallies and protests, and fund raising. Older women were, like older men, respected as *kupuna*. See M. J. Harden, *Voices of Wisdom: Hawaiian Elders Speak* (Kula, 1999); and Jay Hartwell, *Na Mamo: Hawaiian People Today* (Honolulu, 1996). On Aunt Clara Ku as "a kupuna," see "Fallen Warriors," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, Aug. 11, 1998.

³⁷ "To Live and Die on Moloka'i," *Honolulu-Star Bulletin*, Sept. 1, 1998; "A Man for Kahoolawe: 'Dr. Noa Emmett Aluli,'" *Maui News*, June 17, 2001; *Native Hawaiian Center of Excellence Newsletter*, April 2002 <<http://www.hawaii.edu/nhcoe/newsletter/html>>, n.p. (June 19, 2002); Uprichard, "Interview with Dr. Emmett Aluli," 47.

³⁸ Aluli and McGregor, "*Mai Ke Mai Ke Ola*," 231–34; Puhukoa interview (Leonani Puhukoa is one of Harry Mitchell's granddaughters). A tape shows Harry Mitchell talking in Hawaiian to Aluli on Kaho'olawe on November 9, 1989, telling him about plants, place names, geographic features used in navigation, and Hawaiian shrines: *Uncle Harry Kuhini Mitchell* (videotape; 2 cassettes, N Maka o K 'Aina, 1996), cassette 2. Ron Youngblood, *On the Hana Coast* (Honolulu, 1983), 94.

³⁹ *Uncle Harry Kuhini Mitchell*, cassette 1. Great Britain used Pacific islands as nuclear test sites through 1958, the United States did so through 1962, and France into the mid-1990s. See David Hanlon, *Remaking Micronesia: Discourses over Development in a Pacific Territory, 1944–1982* (Honolulu, 1998), 210–13. See also Stewart Firth, "A Nuclear Pacific," in *Cambridge History of the Pacific Islanders*, ed. Denoon et al., 324–57; and Michael Hamel-Green, "Regional Arms Control in the South Pacific: Island State Response to Australia's Nuclear Free Zone Initiative," *Contemporary Pacific*, 3 (Spring 1991), 59–84. For more detail, see Stewart Firth, *Nuclear Playground* (Honolulu, 1987).

⁴⁰ On the legal actions, see Norris, "Kaho'olawe," 108–20. The main suit was *Aluli v. Brown*, 602 F.2d 876 (1979). Harold Brown was the secretary of the navy.

⁴¹ U.S. Navy, *Draft Supplement 10-31-77 to Final Environmental Statement concerning Military Use of the Kahoolawe Island Target Complex in the Hawaiian Archipelago, February 1972* (n.p., n.d.), 9g–9i, 14a, 29m, 29v, A6. With regard to the goats and sheep, see *ibid.*, 14a. The archaeological work was carried on by the Hawaiian Historic Places Review Board, a state body, which found numerous archaeological sites and features and urged that the entire island of Kaho'olawe be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. See Pyle interview. (Pyle was a member of the review board.) On archaeological discoveries, see "Kahoolawe Uncovered," *Sunday Honolulu Star-Bulletin and Advertiser*, July 24, 1977; and *Honolulu Advertiser*, Aug. 19, 1980, p. A-3.

⁴² Walter Ritte and Emmett Aluli, "Public Testimony on the Navy's Revised Environmental Impact Statement," April 25, 1978, file 5, box 2, Navy Kahoolawe Collection; Isaac Hall, "Testimony," April 10, 1978, file 9, box 1, *ibid.* In September 2003 the Sierra Club honored Isaac Hall with its prestigious William O. Douglas Award; see "Environmental Activists Always Reasonable," *Maui News*, Sept. 26, 2003.

⁴³ Karl Mowat, Jon Van Dyke, and Leilanai Hiaaa Mitchell, "Testimony," April 25, 1978, file 5, box 2, Navy Kahoolawe Collection; Ry Barbin, John Bose, and Ricky Tugenkamp, "Testimony," April 10, 1978, file 9, box 1, *ibid.*

⁴⁴ On the signing of the consent decree, see "Kahoolawe Cleanup Agreement Signed," *Honolulu Advertiser*, Dec. 2, 1980. On the listing of Kaho'olawe in the National Register, see *New York Times*, April 25, 1982, p. 15.

⁴⁵ See articles in the newsletter of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, an agency of the state of Hawai'i: Jeff Clark, "KICC Reschedules Draft Report Release, Hearings," *Ka Wai Ola O Oha*, 9 (Sept. 1992), 1, 8; and Jeff Clark, "Cleaning Rites of Healing and Rejuvenation," *ibid.* (Oct. 1992), 12, 13.

⁴⁶ See, for example, *Honolulu Advertiser*, March 7, 1988, p. A-3; *ibid.*, May 24, 1988, p. A-3; *Honolulu Star-Bulletin and Advertiser*, March 27, 1988, p. A-9; *ibid.*, May 24, 1988, p. 1.

⁴⁷ For reprints of the acts and of "Presidential Memorandum for Secretary of Defense," Oct. 22, 1990, see Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission, *Kaho'olawe Island: Restoring a Cultural Treasure*, 111–15. See also Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission, *Interim Report to the United States Congress, July 31, 1993* (Honolulu, 1993). Hannibal Tavares, "Opening Comments, May 14, 1991," in Preliminary Public Hearing, by Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission (Wailuku, 1991), 4–5. This document is a verbatim transcript of the hearings.

⁴⁸ Rendell (Ka'imipono) Tong, Dana Hall, Charles Maxwell, and Inez McPhee Ashdown, "Testimony," May 14, 1991, in *Preliminary Public Hearing*, by Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission, 25, 47–52, 66–67, 135–36.

⁴⁹ Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission, *Kaho'olawe Island: Restoring a Cultural Treasure*, 36–37.

⁵⁰ For a valuable comparison, see John Whitehead, "Alaska and Hawai'i: The Cold War States," in *The Cold War American West, 1945–1989*, ed. Kevin Fernlund (Albuquerque, 1998), 189–210. On the Sagebrush Rebellion, see Carl Abbott, *The Metropolitan Frontier: Cities in the Modern American West* (Tucson, 1993), 167–68.

⁵¹ Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission, *Kaho'olawe Island: Restoring a Cultural Treasure*, 36–37.

⁵² U.S. Navy and the State of Hawai'i, *Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Island of Kaho'olawe, Hawai'i, May 6, 1994* (n.p., 1994); State of Hawai'i, *Quitclaim Deed from the United States of America to the State of Hawaii for the Island of Kaho'olawe, Hawai'i, May 7, 1994* (Honolulu, 1994); Department of Defense Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1994, tit. 10, Pub. L. No. 103–139, 107 Stat. 1418 (1993); State of Hawai'i, *Session Laws of Hawai'i Passed by the Seventeenth State Legislature, Special Session 1993 and Regular Session 1994, Act 161, Chapter 6-K* (Honolulu, 1995), 355–58; Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission and the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, "Letter of Understanding Pertaining to the Island of Kaho'olawe, February 16, 1995" <<http://www.brouhaha.net/ohana/lou.pdf>> (June 19, 2002); State of Hawai'i, *Hawai'i Revised Statutes, 1997, Cumulative Supplement, Chapter 6-K* (Honolulu, 1998), 52–55.

⁵³ Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission, "Use Plan, December 1995."

⁵⁴ *Honolulu Advertiser*, March 20, 2000, p. 1; *Maui News*, Aug. 5, 2000, p. 1; *ibid.*, Jan. 31, 2003, p. 3; *ibid.*, Feb. 9, 2003, p. 1.

⁵⁵ Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence*, 13.

⁵⁶ Jeff Clark, "Kaho'olawe Draft Use Plan Presented," *Ka Wai Ola O Oha*, 12 (Sept. 1995), 6.

⁵⁷ Examining Chicago, the historian David Pellow has analyzed "conflicts over solid wastes and pollution in urban areas, particularly in communities of color" and "workplaces where immigrants and low-income populations live and labor." See Pellow, *Garbage Wars*, vii. Robert Gottlieb, "Reconsidering Environmentalism: Complex Movements, Diverse Roots," *Environmental History Review*, 17 (Winter 1993), 2–3.

⁵⁸ See Robert Rogers, *Destiny's Landfall: A History of Guam* (Honolulu, 1995), 204–90; and Laura Maria Torres Souder, *Daughters of the Island: Contemporary Chamorro Women Organizers on Guam* (Lanham, 1992). George Helm, "Notes," n.d., files 9, 10, box 1, Helm Collection. On how Pacific peoples have

reconstructed their pasts to deal with the present, see Roger Keesing, "Creating the Past: Custom and Identity in the Contemporary Pacific," *Contemporary Pacific*, 1 (Spring–Fall 1989), 19–39.